

PATIENT GUIDE TO...

Appointment Preparation

Prepare for your medical appointments with
guidance on questions and considerations.



YOUR GUIDE TO...

Appointment Preparation

Spending just a few minutes preparing for your appointment can help ensure you get the most out of your time with your clinician. This guide offers practical considerations to take before your visit or remote appointments, from writing down symptoms to preparing the questions you want to ask.

PREPARE YOUR QUESTIONS



Make a list and prioritise two or three important questions.

You may consider asking:

About tests, such as blood tests and scans?

- What are the tests for?
- What are my results, and what do they mean?
- How and when will I get the results?

About treatments

- Are there other ways to treat my condition?
- How long will I need treatment for?
- Are there any side effects or risks?
- How will I know if the treatment is working?
- How effective is this treatment?
- What will happen if I don't have any treatment?

About symptoms

- Are my symptoms associated with PBC?
- Are there any treatments for my symptoms?
- Do I need a bone density scan?

About living with PBC

- Is there anything I should stop or avoid doing?
- Is there anything else I can do to help myself?
- What happens if things get worse?
- Do you have any written information?

Our Patient Guide to Discussing PBC with your Clinician is a useful resource for preparing relevant questions to ask your clinician.

BEFORE YOUR APPOINTMENT



- ☐ What to bring. As well as your questions, it is important to have all medications and symptoms listed, plus a pen and paper to write down notes.

Medications List

List or bring all the medicines you are taking, including vitamins and supplements.

Symptoms

Write down details of your symptoms, including when they started and any changes.

- ☐ Ask for support. You can arrange for a friend or family member to come with you. You can also ask your hospital or surgery for an interpreter or communication support.
- ☐ Arrange transport. Plan how you are going to get to your appointment, if and where you can park (if relevant), and what time you need to arrive to ensure you are ready for your appointment in good time. Clinics can become very busy at times, and you may be required to have blood tests so allow for extra time after your appointment if arranging transport home.
- ☐ Additional considerations. If you are booked to have an Ultrasound, Fibroscan etc. check the instructions on your appointment letter to see if you need to fast before attending these scans.

DURING YOUR APPOINTMENT



Remember, you and your clinician are a partnership in achieving the best care for you, so feel confident to ask questions, and ask for answers to be explained or repeated as required.

- ☐ Write things down. To help remember things, or ask a family member or friend to take notes.

You may consider asking:

- for things to be repeated or explained if you don't understand, "Can you say that again? I still don't understand."
- for any words or acronyms you don't recognise to be explained and written down.
- what should happen next and when? "Do I come back and see you?" or "Who do I contact if things get worse?"
- for copies of any letters written about you – you are entitled to see these.
- what happens if you're not sent appointment details.
- if you can have the results of any tests.

- ☐ Before you leave your appointment. Check that you've covered everything on your list and you understand everything. You can ask "Can I just check I understood what you said?"

BEFORE YOUR APPOINTMENT



- ☐ Keep notes in a safe place. Write down what you discussed and what happens next.
- ☐ Dates for the diary. Don't forget to book any tests, or your next appointment if you can, put the dates in your diary.
- ☐ Support for life. Visit pbcfoundation.international to find out about the PBC Foundation's support services.

REMOTE APPOINTMENTS



Some appointments may take place via telephone or online video calls, especially if you live in a rural or remote area.

Remember to have your phone charged and turned up loud so you hear the call. Your call may not come at the exact time it is scheduled - just like face to face appointments it may not run on time. So have your phone with you for an hour either side of your appointment time.

Use the speaker function on your phone so you can take notes at the same time, and just like a face to face appointment, have a support person with you if you would like to.

NOTES:



The PBC Foundation is the largest PBC patient support organisation in the world. Our purpose is to have a positive impact on the quality of life of every person affected by PBC. Our services are provided free of charge to all registered service users, and include our helpline, website, meetings, conferences and publications.

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